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WASHINGTON: THE MAN, THE FACTS, THE MYTHS

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INTRODUCTION

George Washington served his country before, during, and after its birth in ways so singular that it would be impossible to name his peer. Others made military contributions; others made political contributions; others made theoretical contributions. Washington, however, is the only American figure of the eighteenth century to have made contributions to practically every facet of the young nation. He defended it before it was a country and while it was in the throes of becoming one. He was its first President, but perhaps his most substantial contribution was made when he refused to run for a third term, thereby setting a precedent which was formally incorporated in the 22nd amendment to the Constitution. His theories of government were well developed and mature, and his theories of the executive and of the conduct of a sovereign nation served the United States well in its early years.

At the remove of two centuries, Washington's physical presence is hard to recapture. That it was impressive is, however, beyond doubt. At over six feet in height, his physical eminence among his peers is clear to anyone who has ever seen an average eighteenth-century bed and noticed its small size. The portraits and engravings of the period unfailingly show a physical presence whose power can be felt even through such a dilute medium.

The facets of Washington's life are generally well known in their outlines, though many of the details may be wanting. His contributions in the realm of significant actions are justifiably famous. Foremost a soldier, he successfully translated his military feats into political ones and thus made history in many respects. Some of the facts are, however, blurred, and this exhibition primarily seeks to document contemporary accounts of his actions or, in other words, the facts about Washington as they were perceived during his lifetime. In some instances, the facts are surprisingly thin.

The myth of Washington is easy to document, for his fame spread over most of Europe. He achieved some reputation for his actions in the Ohio Country, but it was not until later that he was portrayed as the saviour of Braddock's star-crossed army. His exploits and cunning in defeating a superior enemy during the American Revolution are the raw stuff of legends, and they blossomed readily, raising Washington to a legendary status far greater than his physical stature. Yet, in a country enamoured of its decidely unique status, Washington's contributions to the new government also added to the legends and myths which surrounded the character and deeds of the nation's first President.

No better ground for budding legends than funeral sermons, those speeches in which the most flattering terms are brought to the character of the deceased. Washington's magnificence in so many arenas literally exhausted American rhetoric in 1800, for it had no words which could adequately praise the nation's premier citizen. Much of the rhetoric was heart-felt and sincere, alive with a warmth missing from the funeral sermons of say, Bossuet, the chief rhetorician of France on such lugubrious occasions in the seventeenth century. The funeral sermons display genuine feelings of loss, and it is in them that the facts and legends are mixed in a fascinating manner. If the myths surrounding Washington started anywhere, it was here, precisely at the point that no fresh facts or deeds would be forthcoming.

No exhibition, no matter how large, could hope to document more than a fraction of Washington's life. The materials shown here adequately demonstrate the difficulty of separating the facts from the myths in the first place. Special attention has been paid to Washington's reputation in France, a virtually undocumented area of his life. One cannot help but be impressed, however, with the many facets of Washington's life that attracted the attention of his contemporaries. It is that attraction which we hope to show.

Catalogue & Exhibition

by

Everett C. Wilkie, Jr.

WASHINGTON: THE MAN, THE FACTS, THE MYTHS

Case 1

"The Cornerstone"

1) John White (1590-1645). The first Century of Scandalous, Malignant Priests, Made and admitted into Benefices by the Prelates, in whose hands the Ordination of Ministers and government of the Church hath been. London: Milles, 1643.

White, also known as "Century White," because of this book, was in some degree responsible for George Washington's coming to America. This book, the result of White's chairmanship of a Parliamentary committee to inquire into immoralities of the clergy, names one Lawrence Washington, whom White accuses of being a drunkard, slanderer, and traitor. Because of the ensuing harassment of the family, Lawrence's son John came to America, where he fathered George. Paul Leicester Ford described this book as the "cornerstone of a library of Washingtoniana."

Open to page 4, where the attack on Lawrence Washington is at item 9.

BEFORE THE REVOLUTION

Washington was hardly an obscure figure at the outbreak of the American Revolution. He had served with distinction in the Virginia colony's efforts to blunt the French threat on their frontiers and had been twice elected a burgess from Frederick, although not before two unsuccessful attempts at the office in 1755 and 1757.

Adventures in the Ohio Country

During Washington's early years, he made several military ventures into the Ohio Country, which Virginia claimed as part of the colony.

The First Trip

2) The Journal of Major George Washington, sent by the Hon. Robert Dinwiddie, Esq.; His Majesty's Lieutenant-Governor, and Commander in Chief of Virginia, to the Commandant of the French Forces on Ohio. London: Jeffreys, 1754.

Washington's first major military adventure was to deliver to the French an ultimatum to withdraw from English territory in the Ohio Country in 1753. Despite numerous obstacles, including attack by Indians and a near drowning in the Allegheny River, Washington carried out Dinwiddie's commission, all of which is reported in the Journal, which was published shortly after Washington returned. Reprinted in London in the edition shown here, the Journal was greeted with much public enthusiasm and discussion both in America and England. This publication is the first time Washington's name was put before the public in a prominent manner.

Open to the title page.

The Second Trip

Washington again went to the Ohio Country in 1754 with a force of Virginians in an attempt to capture Fort Duquesne. This mission failed when Washington was confronted by a superior force of French and Indians, thus forcing him to defend Fort Necessity against their successful assault.

3) William Smith (1727-1803). A Review of the Military Operations in North America; From the Commencement of the French Hostilities on the Frontiers of Virginia, in 1753, to the Surrender of Oswego, on the 14th of August, 1756. New York: Robertson, 1770.

Sometimes attributed to William Livingstone, this small book contains a favorable discussion of Washington's actions in his attempts to defend Fort Necessity and a denunciation of the treacherous and bloodthirsty nature of the Indians.

Open to the discussion of the battle and the terms of capitulation.

The Third Trip

Washington's third trip into the Ohio Country was as an officer with General Braddock's army, which had been sent to capture Fort Duquesne. The expedition ended in disaster.

4) "The Draught of Genl. Braddock's Route towards Fort Du Quesne as deliver'd to Capt. Mc. Keller Ingineer by Christopher Gist the 15th of Sept. 1755."

The British manuscript map shows Braddock's route and all the encampments from Fort Cumberland (just above the compass) to the site of the attack just south of Fort Duquesne. Also shown are several of the Indian villages, such as Mingo Town.

Washington as Legislator

5) An Exact Abridgement of All the Public Acts of Assembly of Virginia, in Force and Use. January 1, 1758. Glasgow: Bryce and Paterson, 1759.

Virginia was an important, growing colony in the mid-eighteenth century. Mercer, head of what would become a prominent Virginia family, had originally published his abridgment at Williamsburg in 1757. This Glasgow reprinting is evidence of the importance of an interest in Washington's home colony.

Washington was elected a burgess in 1758. These are the laws in effect when he took his seat.

Open to the title page.

★ ★ ★ ★

CASE 2

AMERICAN REVOLUTION

It was the American Revolution that thrust Washington into international prominence. From all appearances, the Continental Army was hopelessly outgunned, and in many instances only Washington's firmness and tactical genius made it possible for the war to continue to its successful conclusion.

Leading an army has always involved the less glorious tasks of procuring supplies, providing discipline for the troops, and administering justice. In addition to commanding the army on the battlefield, Washington often gave personal attention to the routine administrative matters that came his way. This section of the exhibit shows documents that illustrate both aspects of the war.

"Fourteen Muskets"

6) On 7 May 1776 Washington ordered 14 muskets from John and Nicholas Brown which were rumored to be in their possession. Shown here are the documents concerning that transaction.

On May 16, Robert Morris wrote the Browns in the name of the Secret Committee of Congress confirming the order for the

fourteen muskets and requesting that the Browns deliver them to General Washington at New York.

On May 27, Nicholas Brown wrote Washington stating that he had gotten the order for the muskets and discussing secure means to ship them to New York. He remarks that the muskets were sent in several batches in case they were seized so that not all of them would be lost. This is a copy of the original letter.

On May 27, Thomas Leach picked up the four remaining muskets out of the original shipment. Shown here is the receipt for them.

"Six boxes of candles"

7) Shown is a copy of the invoice for six boxes of candles that the Browns supplied to General Washington in January, 1776.

The Army's Conduct

Washington expressed a concern throughout the course of the American Revolution that the citizenry suffer as little as possible, particularly if that suffering was brought on by the conduct of troops under his command. The image of the Continental Army was determined, to some extent, by the contrasts between its conduct and that of the British army. Shown here are two items which graphically depict the differences that Washington wished to impress on the citizens of the United States.

8) Hezekiah Smith to Nicholas Brown, 24 July 1779.

The behaviour of the British troops was of great concern to the citizenry in areas under British control because of the army's reputation for misconduct and brutality. In this letter, Smith remarks on the behaviour of the British army: "You have doubtless heard of the Enemies Barbarity, Cruelty, & Wickedness in Connecticut of late, in burning, plundering, destroying & Ravishing, etc. The earth is full of Wickedness!"

9) By His Excellency George Washington. [Boston, 1776].

After the British abandoned Boston in early 1776, Washington issued and had printed this general order directed at his own troops and at the citizens of the city itself. Washington's purpose in issuing this order was to ensure that his Continental troops were not guilty of behaviour similar to that engaged in by the British army.

John André

The case of British major John André focused much attention on Washington and the conduct of American military justice. André was caught with plans of West Point, which Benedict Arnold had given him at a clandestine meeting. Because André was dressed in civilian clothes, he was arrested, tried and hanged as a spy. It was rumored that even Marie Antoinette intervened with Washington on André's behalf.

10) Charles Inglis (1734-1816). The Case of Major John André, Adjutant-General to the British Army, Who was put to Death by the Rebels, October 2, 1780, Candidly Represented: With Remarks on the Said Case. New York: Rivington, 1780.

Inglis was Bishop of Nova Scotia and an ardent Loyalist. This essay excoriates the proceedings which led to André's execution. Inglis says, in part: "Whatever may be the consequences of Major André's execution. . . one is certain--it has fixed an indelible stain on General Washington's character--a stain which no time can efface. . . . His name will be transmitted to posterity with this hateful circumstance--that he was the unrelenting MURDERER of Major André" (p. 21).

This pamphlet was apparently suppressed and never published; these are believed to be the proof sheets.

Open to the title page.

11) Proceedings of a Board of General Officers, Held by Order of His Excellency Gen. George Washington. . . Respecting Major John André. Philadelphia: Bailey, 1780.

The Proceedings were published numerous times in 1780 and form the official statement of the American view of the case, which had been tried by such luminaries as Lafayette, Clinton, and von Steuben. The report closes with the remarks: ". . . the proceedings against him were not guided by passion or resentment. The practice and usage of war were against his request, and made the indulgence he solicited, circumstanced as he was, inadmissible." The latter sentence refers to André's request that he not be hanged but rather executed in a more honorable manner.

Open to the title page.

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CASE 3

The Army's Battles

Besides the sometimes difficult administrative business of the army, there was also the rather grim business of fighting the battles. The majority of the documents shown here are French reports of battlefield events; however, the centerpiece is a volume of Washington's correspondence from the period of the American Revolution. The contrast between the glowing reports printed abroad and Washington's views is striking.

12) Relation de la Victoire remportée par le Général Washington sur le Général Howe, le 10 Juin 1777. Lyon: De La Roche, 1777.

This little broadsheet borders on propaganda, for its relation of the events involved enormously inflates their importance. The action described appears to be a skirmish near New Brunswick, but the broadsheet makes it sound like a major battle in which the Continental Army, aided by its French friends, routed the armies of both Howe and Cornwallis, forcing them to hole up in New York. Whatever the event, it was part of Howe's campaign to link up with Burgoyne, who was marching down from Canada.

13) Relation Américaine, De l'Affaire du 28 juin, entre les Armées de Washington & de Clinton, de Trenton le 6 Août 1778. Tours: Vanguer, 1778.

Another ephemeral French publication reporting news about the American Revolution. Despite the announced subject, the pamphlet actually concerns the Battle of Monmouth. The actions of the American and French troops are highly praised: "Our troops comported themselves with the greatest bravery and put up an intrepid resistance against the elite of the British forces" (p. 3).

This battle was indecisive and is best remembered because Washington had General Charles Lee court-martialed for an inappropriate retreat and because sunstroke and heat prostration accounted for over ten percent of the British dead.

14) Broadside beginning: "L'Amour paternal. . . ." [Philadelphia: Claypool], 1780.

Although signed only by Lafayette, this broadside is actually the result of collaboration between Washington and him. It was believed that if General Clinton could be made

to withdraw a large number of troops from New York to defend against an impending invasion of Canada, the way would be cleared for Washington's outnumbered army to capture the city. It is an excellent example of the tactical genius Washington brought to the war.

Ironically, Benedict Arnold, who was placed in charge of secretly printing the broadside, communicated the contents to Clinton himself.

15) Washington to Joseph Reed, from Camp above Trenton Falls, 23rd December 1776.

This letter informs Reed of the proposed surprise attack on the Hessians at Trenton. In it Washington discusses the desperate need for a victory and urges utter secrecy about the plans as the surest way to achieve it, in light of the defects of his army: "For heaven's sake keep this to yourself, as the discovery of it may prove fatal to us, our numbers, sorry I am to say, being less than I had any conception of. . . ."

16) Détail Général du terrible combat qu'il y a eu entre l'Armée Anglaise, commandée par le Général Clinton, & celle des Américains, commandée par le Général Vasington, lors de laretraite de l'Armée Anglaise de Philadelphie pour se rendre à Neufyork, avec le nombre des tués, blessés, & prisonniers, le 29 Août 1778, à Amelys-Toun, près de Rariton. Roune, 1778.

This pamphlet recounts Washington's pursuit of the British army after the Battle of Monmouth. Despite Washington's efforts, the British managed to retreat successfully to New York.

17) Relation Générale de la Victoire remportée par les forces combinées de la France de l'Amérique, commandées par M. le Comte de Rochambeau, le General Washington, & M. le Comte de Grasse, sur l'Armée Anglaise, avec les Articles de la Capitulation faite avec le Comte de Cornwalis. [Toulouse? 1781].

This French printing of the events of the Battle of Yorktown is typical of the ephemeral nature of many of the French reports on the events of the Revolution. Ironically, this particular report concentrates on the naval actions in which the French fleet chased off the English fleet, thereby ensuring Washington's victory.

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CASE 4

AFTER THE WAR

Washington resigned his command of the Continental Army in 1783, after having fixed the date for cessation of hostilities as April 19 of that year, the anniversary of the Battle of Lexington, and having taken possession of New York from the British. He then "retired" to Mount Vernon, until elected President, which office he assumed on 30 April 1789. After serving two terms, he again retired to Mount Vernon, where he died.

Shown in this case are a few of the documents that chronicle Washington's life during the years between his resignation from the army and his death.

Society of the Cincinnati

Few of Washington's actions ever involved him in more heated, caustic controversy than the formation of the Society of the Cincinnati, in which he accepted honorary membership. Made up exclusively of, and limited to, those who were officers in the United States army that fought in the Revolutionary War, the Society was attacked by some as having the seed of a monarchic, ruling class that would eventually subjugate the rest of America and produce despotism more than that which had existed while America was a British colony.

18) Aedanus Burke (1743?-1802?). Considerations on the Society or Order of Cincinnati. Charleston: A. Timothy, 1783.

This celebrated pamphlet, which was imitated by Mirabeau and Chamfort, roundly attacks the Society as an elitist organization which will lead to the establishment of a privileged ruling class in the United States. Burke is, however, grudgingly complimentary of Washington's behaviour: "The discretion of the Commander in Chief, which I take to be his distinguishing characteristic, is signal on this occasion; for he has appeared quite neutral in this business, if we except his becoming an honorary member of it" (p. 5). Of the Society itself, Burke has but one conclusion: "There is an absolute necessity of extirpating it altogether" (p. 5).

Open to the title page.

19) Honoré Gabriel Riquetti, comte de Mirabeau (1749-1791). Considérations sur l'Ordre de Cincinnatus, ou Imitation d'un pamphlet Anglo-Américain. Londres: Johnson, 1784.

One of the more celebrated attacks on the Society, this work had been the brainchild of Benjamin Franklin, who suggested it to Mirabeau and his collaborator, Chamfort. In it is a letter from Turgot to Price thanking him for a copy of Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty. In the letter, Turgot condemns "the infatuation of your nation with this absurd plan to subjugate America."

Open to the first page of Turgot's letter.

20) Honoré Gabriel Riquetti, comte de Mirabeau (1749-1791). Considérations sur l'Ordre de Cincinnatus, ou Imitation d'un pamphlet Anglo-Américain. Londres: Johnson, 1784.

An augmented edition, opened to Franklin's contribution to the text. In this letter-essay, Franklin ridicules and condemns any idea of "descending honor," wondering how much of the original honor would be left to descendents after several generations had passed and the honor had been divided so many times that only smidgens were left to enjoy.

21) The President's Address to the People of the United States, Announcing his intention of Retiring from Public Life at the Expiration of the Present Constitutional Term of Presidency. Philadelphia: Ormrod & Conrad, 1796.

Washington's firm refusal to run for a third term set the example to be followed until finally the 22nd Amendment made running for a third term an unconstitutional act. This address revealed Washington's deep concern that the nascent United States avoid European intrigues and learn to cherish and nurture its hard-won independence.

Open to the title page. The portrait is a separate engraving bound in as a frontispiece.

22) Remarks Occasioned by the Late Conduct of Mr. Washington, as President of the United States. Philadelphia: Bache, 1797.

This is one of the more scurrilous attacks on Washington's conduct as President. The anonymous writer, however, does not merely criticize Washington for his handling of foreign affairs, he also attacks his conduct during the American Revolution, contending that all along Washington was grabbing power for himself instead of properly fighting the war. All in all, the writer concludes that Washington's character and being are antithetical to a republic.

23) Washington's Cash Accounts for Mount Vernon, 1794-1799.

After Washington left the government, he returned to his estate at Mount Vernon, where he lived out the rest of

his life. These two manuscript account books, in Washington's hand, provide a fascinating glimpse into the day-to-day operations of his estate and provide evidence of the charitable feelings which so often animated him. During the course of these six years, Washington gave away literally hundreds of dollars to charitable purposes, ranging all the way from money to support ministers and schools to beggars who stopped by the estate.

Open to a typical page from 1795 and to the last entry for 1799.

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CASE 5

THE BIOGRAPHIES

Although an attempt had been made in 1780 to write a partial biography of Washington's life, the effort began in earnest immediately after his death. Generally, the biographies published in 1800 tended to be appreciations or merely compilations of various documents which editors and publishers had in hand. Shown here are some of the productions which appeared shortly after Washington's death.

24) The Will of General Washington: To which is annexed a Schedule of his Property, Directed to be Sold. Alexandria: Printed from the Record of the County Court at Fairfax, 1800.

Washington's will was a popular document and was published during 1800 at several cities, although this is probably the first edition. In it, the legendary charity and probity of Washington are amply demonstrated, for he conditionally frees his slaves, endows several schools, and provides generous financial relief for those with whom he has had business dealings.

Open to the title page.

25) John Bell. "A Sketch of Mr. Washington's Life and Character." In Wharton's A Poetical Epistle To His Excellency George Washington, Esq. Providence: Wheeler, 1781.

This sketch is the first attempt at a biography of Washington. Among other high praises heaped on Washington, there is the assertion that only Washington's valor and good sense saved what there was left of Braddock's army at Fort Duquesne.

Open to the first page of text.

26) Letter From His Excellency George Washington, President of The United States Of America, To Sir John Sinclair, Bart. M.P. On Agriculture And Other Interesting Topics. London: Bulmer [etc.], 1800.

John Sinclair (1754-1835) was a prominent figure in English agriculture who is best remembered as the man who introduced the words "statistics" and "statistical" into the language. This book of his correspondence with Washington illustrates a facet of Washington as plantation manager that could have been easily overlooked and was published by Sinclair "that it may make a due impression upon the minds of those, who might otherwise be induced, to dedicate themselves entirely, either to the phantoms of military fame, or the tortures of political ambition" (pp. 9-10).

Open to the end of Letter IV and the beginning of Letter V.

27) John Corry. The Life of George Washington, Late President and Commander In Chief Of The Armies Of The United States of America. London: Myers, 1800.

Little is known of Corry, the author of this flattering biography of Washington. The biography does, however, tend to be evenhanded, discussing Washington's faults and errors of judgment, although Corry paliates them insofar as possible. The biography ends on a ringing note: "He was the brightest luminary of liberty in the American hemisphere" (p. 228).

Open to the title page.

28) Thomas Condie. Biographical Memoirs of the Illustrious Gen. Geo: Washington, Late President Of The United States Of America, &c. &c. . . . Philadelphia: Charless & Ralston, 1800.

Parts of this history had appeared in 1798 in the Philadelphia Monthly Magazine. This publication is here reprinted with considerable additions to bring it up to Washington's death. As with most such histories, it tends to rely heavily on letters and documents, which are republished in their entirety. Condie's attitude towards his subject, however, is that which marked early biographers of Washington: "It will require time to unfold, and ability to record, the History of the life of his Excellency, in a manner worthy of his character, and but few are to be found who are capable of the task" (p. ii).

Open to the title page.

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CASE 6

PROPAGANDA

The American Revolution naturally occasioned a tremendous amount of propaganda sympathetic to one side or the other. Shown here are some of the more creative essays on the subject of the Revolution.

29) The Conquerors. A Poem Displaying the Glorious Campaigns of 1775, 1776, 1777, &c. &c. London: Setchell and Fielding & Walter, [1778].

This anonymous poem heaps lavish praise on Washington and the American cause while excoriating Great Britain and her rulers. The treatment accorded the latter is so severe that the reviewer in the Monthly Review remarked only: "Contemptible, beyond all power of expression!"

Open to the description of the Battle of Trenton (p. 28).

30) Charles Henry Wharton (1748-1833). A Poetical Epistle To His Excellency George Washington, Esq. London: Dilly [etc.], 1780.

This poem in praise of Washington was immensely popular after its appearance in the United States. Although the first edition was supposedly printed in Annapolis in 1779, this is probably the genuine first edition.

Wharton, an American, was unable to return to his native country because the Revolution had stranded him in England. This poem was written to raise money to relieve American prisoners of war in Great Britain.

Open to the title page.

31) Lettre du comte de Chanmburg, écrite de Rome au baron de Hohendorff, commandant des troupes Hessoises en Amerique in L'Espion Devalisé. Londres [i.e., Neuchâtel], 1782.

The embarrassment the British felt over the defeat at Trenton soon proved to be more than a military humiliation, for the Hessian debacle provided ample opportunity for satirists. Several vicious satires were published or circulated in manuscript, of which this spurious letter, long believed to have been by Franklin,

is the most famous. In it, the Hessian rulers are portrayed as petty despots who sell their subjects for mere love of money: "I have learned, with ineffable pleasure, of the courage my troops showed at the Trenton affair, and you cannot imagine the joy I felt upon learning that out of 1950 Hessians who were in the battle, only 345 escaped."

Open to the first page of text.

32) Letters From General Washington, To several of his Friends in the Year 1776. [New York: Rivington], 1778.

These letters, the authorship of which has been attributed to John Vardill or John Randolph, appeared in London the previous year and received fairly wide circulation in England. Clearly meant as discouragement to American Independence, the letters caused a scandal involving Washington, for they repeatedly showed him as discouraged by the war and even had him declaring that he was not in favor of independence: "I do not really wish for independence. I hope there are few who do..." (p. 12).

33) The Battle of Brooklyn, A Farce Of Two Acts. New York: Rivington; reprinted Cork: Sullivan, 1777.

This anonymous farce was intended to satirize Washington and the American cause after the defeat of the American forces at Brooklyn, New York, in early 1776. In it, a character named, appropriately enough, Joe King is the raisonneur who provides the appropriate overview of motives and events; with him is placed another loyalist mouthpiece, Noah. As the play closes, Noah exclaims: "And O! almighty disposer of human events, open the eyes of my deluded fellow-subjects, in this, once, happy country" (p. 23).

Open to the "Dramatis Personae" and opening of Act I. Also shown is the title page of the Edinburgh edition.

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CASE 7

WASHINGTON AND FRANCE

Washington never achieved in France the popular acclaim that Franklin enjoyed. However, Washington was well known and his

career attracted the interests of French historians, playwrights, and poets in much the same way his military achievements drew the attention of French statesmen. Shown here are some of the French documents relating to Washington.

34) Edme Louis Billardon de Sauvigny (1736-1812). Vashington Ou La Liberte Du Nouveau Monde, Tragedie. Paris: Maillard D'Orivelle, 1791.

One of the more famous literary manifestations of Washington's enormous popularity in France during the French Revolution. Although Washington himself developed serious doubts as the Reign of Terror developed, he is here shown as the military hero and political sage whose precepts are destined to guide the Revolution of the French.

Open to the title page.

35) Antoine Leonard Thomas, (1732-1785). Jumonville, [Paris], 1759.

On May 27, 1754, Washington's command at Fort Necessity encountered a French party led by Coulon de Jumonville. In the ensuing confusion, Jumonville and most of his party were slain. The French contended that Jumonville had approached under a flag of truce and had, therefore, been murdered; but Americans contended that they had been attacked.

News of Jumonville's death produced an outpouring of rage in France, and resulted in a rather negative image of Washington. Despite the personal popularity Washington achieved in France after 1771, the frequent republications of this poem into the early nineteenth century brought up the unfortunate incident.

Open to the title page.

36) L. de Chavannes de la Giraudière. L'Amérique Délivrée, Esquisse D'un Poëme sur l'Indépendance de l'Amérique. 2 vols. Amsterdam: Crajenschot, 1783.

The first poem in French to celebrate the complete independence of the U.S. from Great Britain. Though ostensibly only an outline for a more complete work, this poem is one of the more learned poems in French about the American Revolution.

Washington is highly praised in numerous verses throughout the poem. Vol. 1 is open to a passage in "Chant Second" in which "l'immortel Washington" is praised in the most generous, universal terms (p. 17). Vol. 2 is open to the engraved title page, with the quote from Addison's play Cato. It was this play that Washington had performed during the terrible winter at Valley Forge as an inspiration to his troops.

37) François, marquis de Barbé-Marbois (1745-1837). Complot d'Arnold et de Henry Clinton contre le États-Unis d'Amérique et le Général Washington (Septembre 1780). Paris: Delaunay, 1831.

Barbé-Marbois was a distinguished French diplomat who held posts in America but who is best remembered as France's principal negotiator during the sale of the Louisiana Purchase. A warm, enthusiastic friend of the United States, he here denounces Arnold's treason at West Point and praises Washington in the most flattering terms. The actual discussion of the treason is preceeded by a forty-six page "Discours sur les États-Unis," which highly praises the new country and Washington's role in its development.

Open to the first page of text.

38) Guillaume Thomas François Raynal (1713-1796). Révolution de l'Amérique. Londres: Davis, 1781.

Raynal, one of the more prolific and popular writers on the affairs of North and South America, extracted this little work from the end of his monumental Histoire Philosophique et Politique des Deux Indes. In this work, he reviews the events leading up to the American Revolution and pays particular attention to the war as it had progressed until 1780. Washington is mentioned in flattering terms as the military genius of the American army.

Open to the title page.

★ ★ ★ ★

CASE 8

WASHINGTON'S DEATH

Washington's death in late 1799 produced an outpouring of grief and eulogies unprecedented in American affairs. In 1800 alone, there were over 250 eulogies or sermons printed in the United States, and several of them ran into second and even third editions. More importantly, tributes were also printed abroad in significant numbers. Shown here are several printings of various texts that appeared on the occasion of Washington's death.

39) Henry Lee (1756-1818). A Funeral Oration On The Death Of General Washington, Delivered In the German Lutheran Church, Philadelphia: At The Request Of Congress On The Twenty-Sixth Of December, 1799. Philadelphia: Ormrod, 1800.

Lee, known as "Light Horse Harry Lee" for his role in the American Revolution, was chosen by Congress to deliver the official oration before that body. This is by far the most famous funeral oration on Washington, still remembered for its immortal phrase: "First in war--first in peace--and first in the hearts of his countrymen. . .", to which it is opened.

Also shown is the title page of a London, 1800, edition of Lee's Oration.

40) Fisher Ames (1758-1808). An Oration on the Sublime Virtues of General George Washington, Pronounced at the Old South Meeting-House in Boston, before his honor the Lieutenant-Governor, the Council, and the Two Branches of the Legislature of Massachusetts, at their Request, on Saturday, the 8th of February, 1800. Boston: Young & Minns, 1800.

Ames was one of the more distinguished New England Federalists, known widely as an orator of considerable skill. His eulogy on Washington is one of the better crafted of the time, though his own ideas on government influence those he attributes to Washington.

Open to the title page.

41) Charles Caldwell (1772-1853). An Elegiac Poem on the Death of General Washington. Philadelphia: The Office of "The True American," 1800.

Caldwell, though only four years old when the American Revolution began, clearly demonstrates in this poem the legendary status that Washington had achieved even among those who could have little first-hand knowledge of his actual contributions to the country.

Open to the first page of text.

42) Louis Jean Pierre, marquis de Fontane (1757-1821). Éloge Funebre de Washington; Prononcé dans le temple de Mars, le 20 pluviôse, an 8. Paris: Agasse & Dupont, an VIII [i.e., 1800].

Fontane, a French poet who would rise to political eminence during the Empire, was commissioned by Napoleon to deliver this eulogy at an official memorial ceremony in Washington's honor. It proved quite popular and was translated into both Dutch and English. The eulogy is

particularly interesting for its direct statement raising Washington to the Classical ideal: "Such a character is worthy of the most splendid days of antiquity" (p. 17).

Open to the title page.

43) Abraham Louis Barbaz (1770-1833). Washingtons avergang ter onsterfelykheid. Amsterdam, 1800.

This laudatory verse in praise of Washington was written by one of the Netherland's most prominent and prolific poets, dramatists, and literary critics.

Open to the title page.

44) Johannes Kinker (1764-1845). Treurzang, bij het plechtig vieren der Nagedachtenis van Washington, in de Maatschappij van verdiensten Felix Meritis, den 21 Maart 1800. Amsterdam: J. ten Brink, 1800.

This eulogy was delivered by a prominent Dutch lawyer and writer. Kinker enjoyed a considerable reputation as a social critic, and this eulogy and the accompanying poem are quite flattering about Washington's virtues as a soldier, statesman, and man.

Open to the engraved frontispiece.

★ ★ ★ ★

SMALL CASES

45) Sketch of the Surprise of German Town by the American Forces Commanded by General Washington. October 4th 1777; by J. Hills, Lt. 23d Regt. & Asst. Engr. *in* William Faden's Atlas of Battles of the American Revolution, together with Maps Shewing the Routes of the British and American Armies.

Following his defeat on 11 September 1777 at Brandywine, which led to Howe's occupation of Philadelphia, Washington determined to attack the British encampment at Germantown. This two-pronged attack on 4 October 1777 proved to be a failure, forcing Washington to withdraw his dispirited troops to Valley Forge, where winter quarters were established.

This colored map shows the development of the battle.

46) Plan of the City and Environs of Quebec, with its Siege and Blockade by the Americans, from the 8th of December 1775 to the 13th of May 1776, *in* William Faden's Atlas of Battles of the American Revolution, together with Maps Shewing the Routes of the British and American Armies.

Benedict Arnold had led an American force through Maine and joined with General Richard Montgomery, who was already near Quebec, to combine forces for an attack on Quebec City. The assault, which took place on 31 December, was a total disaster for the Americans, who were forced to retreat. Montgomery was killed and much of his army made prisoners. Arnold finally withdrew from the vicinity in May, 1776.

★ ★ ★ ★

PANEL 1

1) Thomas Jeffreys (died 1771). "Plan of Fort Le Quesne, Built by the French, At The Fork of the Ohio and Monogahela in 1754." London: Sayer & Jeffreys, 1756?.

Washington had been sent by Dinwiddie in 1754 to try to prevent the occupation of this site by the French. This handsome engraving shows the classic star fort the French erected on the site after Washington decided his force was too few in number to attack the French or to invest the half-completed fort.

2) Thomas Jeffreys (died 1771) "A Plan of the Field of Battle and disposition of the Troops as they were on the March at the time of the Attack on the 9th of July 1755." London: Jeffreys, 1756?.

The advance of Braddock's army on Fort Duquesne in 1755 ended in a disastrous defeat after the column fled in a disorderly rout following an attack by French and Indian forces. The defeat set off an acrimonious debate in this country and in Great Britain concerning whose fault the disaster was. Washington's prowess and bravery earned for him great commendation later, and it gradually came to be believed in certain quarters that it was only his personal valor that saved the British column from total extinction.

3) Bernard Romans (ca. 1720 - ca. 1784). An Exact View of the Late Battle at Charlestown June 17th 1775. [Philadelphia: Brooks, 1775].

A perfectly serious view of the Battle of Bunker Hill and the burning of Charlestown. The mounted officer shown on left center as number 9 is Putnam.

★ ★ ★ ★

PANEL 2

4) Sebastien Bauman (1739-1803). To His Excellency Genl. Washington...This Plan of the investment of York and Gloucester has been surveyed and laid down, and is Most humbly dedicated.... Philadelphia, 1782.

This is one of the more famous battle plans of the Battle of Yorktown.

5) Boston & Environs, ca. 1776.

This manuscript map shows Boston as it appeared at the beginning of the war. Bunker Hill is at the right center.

6) A Plan of the Operations of the King's Army under the Command of General Sr. William Howe, K.B., in New York and East New Jersey, against the American Forces Commanded by General Washington, 12th October - 28th November 1776. London: Faden, 1777.

Washington had withdrawn most of his forces to White Plains, although he had left Fort Washington defended. Howe pursued him to White Plains where an indecisive engagement was fought. Although the Americans had to retreat, they had inflicted so many casualties on the British that they were not pursued.

★ ★ ★ ★

PANEL 3

7) Edward Savage (1761-1817). The Washington Family/La Famille de Washington. Philadelphia: Savage; London: Wilkinson, 1798.

Washington is shown here in an impressive classical setting with his family. The scene is heavily allegorical, recalling Washington's military exploits, his terms as President (the map is of the District of Columbia), and his world-wide fame, suggested by the globe at lower left.

8) George Washington, Esqur. General and Commander in Chief of the Continental Army in America. London: Shepherd, 1775.

This handsome equestrian depiction of Washington captures much of the impressiveness of Washington as a military commander. The battle in the background is apparently a generic one, although it is probably meant to suggest either Concord or Bunker Hill.

9) Alexander Robertson. Mount Vernon in Virginia The Seat of the late Lieut. General George Washington Commander in Chief of the Armies of the United States. London: Jules; New York: Robertson, 1800.

This handsome, hand-colored view of Mount Vernon is the earliest engraving of Washington's home to be sold in Great Britain.

★ ★ ★ ★

PANEL 4

10) Amos Doolittle. A Display of the United States of America. New Haven: Doolittle.

Shown are two states of the same plate. The one on the left is the newer, executed in 1791. These engraved prints are also bibliographically significant because the plate used to engrave them was apparently also used to print a map before being reworked. Vestiges of the map may be discerned clearly in the 1791 edition in the space between the New Jersey ring and the rule below it.

Washington's stature in the new country was so celebrated that Doolittle delineated him in different poses for both prints.

11) William Warner, eng. Gen. Washington. Philadelphia: Dainty and Flagg, 1845.

This heroic nineteenth-century engraving of Washington on the field at Trenton was done from the Trumball painting.